Daily Report

Latin America

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FBIS-LAT-91-086 *3 May 1991*

CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: On 6 May 1991, the DAILY REPORT will begin phasing in new radio and television sourcelines that reflect how a station identifies itself. This change eliminates the "Domestic Service" and "Television Service" designations in favor of the station identification as broadcast. The presence of a new sourceline reflects this change in policy, rather than the establishment of a new station or network.

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

CARIBBEAN

Cuba

Basic Industry Minister Reportedly Defects *[Bonaire Radio]* 1
Castro Presents Awards to Workers, Union Leaders *[Havana TV]* 1
More on Award Presentions *[Havana TV]* 1
Union Delegations Meet With CTC Leaders *[Havana TV]* 2

CENTRAL AMERICA

El Salvador

Government-FMLN Talks To Resume 15 May *[Mexico City NOTIMEX]* 3
FMLN Claims Government Not Keeping Agreements *[Mexico City NOTIMEX]* 3
'Second Part' of 'Mexico Declaration' Annex *[LA PRENSA GRAFICA 2 May]* 4

Guatemala

Serrano Satisfied With Guerrilla Meeting *[Mexico City NOTIMEX]* 6

Nicaragua

'Commander Ruben' Says Shooting 'Irresponsible' *[Managua Radio]* 6
Godoy Views Attack on Chamorro, Police Defiance *[LA PRENSA 29 Apr]* 7
CIAV-OAS Denies Alleging Links to Attack *[Managua Radio]* 8

SOUTH AMERICA

Chile

President Aylwin Speaks at Labor Day Rally *[Santiago TV]* 9
* Poll Reveals Public View of Political Parties *[LA NACION 24 Mar]* 11
* Regional Government Reforms Sent to Congress *[EL MERCURIO 6 Apr]* 12

Colombia

Rebels Call Off Caracas Meeting With Government *[Madrid EFE]* 13
Government Wants Commitment *[Madrid EFE]* 14
Constituent Assembly Reforms Internal Statutes *[Bogota Radio]* 14

Venezuela

* Study Indicates Decline in Purchasing Power *[EL NACIONAL 18 Mar]* 14

Cuba

Basic Industry Minister Reportedly Defects

FL0205125991 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 2 May 91

[Text] A Cuban official has defected to the United States. The minister of Basic Industry, Jose Orro, [name and title as heard] announced his defection on a Miami radio station Monday. He has reportedly applied for political asylum in the U.S.

The report was also published in THE MIAMI HERALD in which Mr Orro was quoted as saying the nuclear ventures of the Cubans are, in his words, worrisome.

Castro Presents Awards to Workers, Union Leaders

FL0205131691 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 2 May 91

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, president of the Councils of State and Ministers, presented awards to a group of workers, labor centers, and union leaders in a ceremony attended by foreign visitors yesterday, 1 May.

[Begin unidentified speaker recording] Today, when the image of the sea of combatant workers who marched through the Revolution Square is still fresh in our minds, the honorable title of Labor Hero of the Republic of Cuba and the Lazaro Pena Order, first class, will be bestowed on a true representation of our working class. These workers, noble representatives of their units, are a genuine example of the work being accomplished every day across the entire country to develop the strategic programs of the revolution. Their attitude and behavior have been exceptional during a special period of our revolution.

They exemplify modesty, humbleness, selflessness, and dedication to their work and the revolution. For the same reasons, the Jesus Menendez medal will be presented to five union leaders representing the ones that have maintained an uncompromising position in defense of the principles of the revolution for the last 20 years. [end recording]

More on Award Presentions

FL0205215091 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 2 May 91

[Excerpt] [Begin recording] [Unidentified reporter] Commander, I would like to ask you, after viewing a parade like the one today, what may some of the skeptics think, those who do not think our country will survive a time like this?

[Castro] It is difficult for me to answer that, because I have never been a skeptic. I do not know what is going through the heads of skeptics.

[Unidentified reporter] After seeing a parade like the one today ....

[Castro, interrupting] I imagine that skeptics must be learning a great lesson, depending on the kind of skeptics they are. There are skeptics who were born that way, and in that case they may learn a lesson, one more lesson, about what the revolution is, what the people are. Those who are not skeptics but pretend to be skeptics, I imagine they are going to feel great bitterness, great disillusionment.

[Unidentified speaker] A big blow.

[Unidentified reporter] I think that one of the most eye-catching moments of the parade today was seeing the young people marching. Seeing them, I recalled the figure of Che [Guevara], who was an example of asceticism and devotion to work. How do you [words indistinct] transmit Che's wisdom to the young people of today?

[Castro] Well, I think that everything that could have been transmitted has already been transmitted by Che through his example, his life, his actions. I think this is shown in the great respect, the great affection, the infinite admiration of the people, the young people, the young people of today and those who were young then, and the old people of the revolution also. So, he was universal; he belonged to all the people, in all senses.

[Unidentified speaker] How beautiful!

[Unidentified reporter] I was referring to his ....

[Castro, interrupting] I think that today he would have felt really very happy, if he had seen this parade. Today at noon I was talking with a friendly visitor who has a good opinion about Cuba and the revolution. He told me he had never imagined he would see an event like the one today. He said he imagined something like it, but not ....[rephrases] He said that it had to be seen, really. He would not have been able to imagine it if he had not seen it. He spoke about the impact of the event. He is a very decent person, a prominent politician in his country. I said, well, I do not know what we can do, because it is impossible to bring everyone here to see what Cuba is like, what Cuba is really like, what the spirit, the mettle, the steel of our people is like.

I do not know, maybe we will have to make a videotape of today's event, but it would never be the same. I do not know if we can make a videotape of this event, what they have filmed, from above, from below, if we could make one and distribute it as one of the ways of partially counteracting ....[changes thought] Because we can see that we live surrounded, not only by capitalism but also by the imperialists' fabulous publicity apparatus. They have the main press agencies, the media, and they disseminate throughout the world whatever they wish and however they wish. It is not easy to wage a war against this constant bombardment of lies, calumnies, and intrigues against the revolution. One of the proofs of this is what has happened concerning human rights. There is no country in the world, no country in the Third World ....[changes thought] They are the allies of the

worst governments in the world, the most repressive ones there ever have been and are in the world.

[Unidentified reporter] What happened in Revolution Square ....

[Castro, interrupting] Because, well, they are carrying out a tremendous campaign against our country, using their propaganda apparatus, trying to confuse people. But in this also we must continue with our unyielding firmness. They are doing all this to try to weaken and demoralize the revolution.

The revolution has spent 30 years under this (?constant rain) of lies. It is also part of these things that we are experiencing a time—I had not mentioned this before—when all of those things that happened over there in some European countries have hit hard and have demoralized many revolutionary forces, many progressive forces, many democratic forces. They [the imperialists] are trying to take advantage of all this. Then there was also the Gulf war [words indistinct] Cuba foresaw what would happen. They turned it into a testing ground for their weapons. This has also given rise on their part to a triumphalist spirit.

This also hit many progressive forces in the world hard morally. Not all of them have enough understanding or awareness or courage to remain steady in the face of all these shows of force. Not all of them can. I would say that Cuba is an exceptional example of patriotism, moral courage, political courage, ideological courage, and a mettle—as I was saying before—that is only comparable to the steel of Maceo's machete. [end recording]

Union Delegations Meet With CTC Leaders

FL0305010491 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 3 May 91

[Text] The 118 delegates from 35 countries who attended the 1 May festivities in Havana met today with leaders of the Cuban Workers Federation [CTC]. The open dialogue became a tribunal of solidarity with the Cuban revolution by the representatives of 61 union organizations from throughout the world. About 30 speakers expressed—in the name of their respective delegations—their support for the Cuban people against the imperialist threats. The U.S. union delegation said that the example given by Cuba in the United Nations regarding the Persian Gulf conflict opened new possibilities in the struggle American young people are waging against war.

The DRPK representatives made common cause by saying that they would defend socialism side-by-side with the Cuban people. For her part, the Nicaragua delegate said that the women of her country will be with Cuba today, tomorrow, and forever. (Aleksandr Zharikov), secretary general of the World Federation of Trade Unions, stated that the multitudinous march of the combative people was the greatest demonstration the world saw on this 1 May, and it was a testimonial to the Cubans' will to support and defend their revolution's line.

El Salvador

Government-FMLN Talks To Resume 15 May

PA0305042191 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0038 GMT 3 May 91

[Text] San Jose, 2 May (NOTIMEX)—Negotiations between the Salvadoran Government and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) will be renewed on 15 May, it was reported today to NOTIMEX by Costa Rican Foreign Ministry sources. The site for the future talks between the two parties has yet to be established.

In addition, FMLN spokesmen said here that the constitutional amendments negotiated last week in Mexico City, and approved days later by the Salvadoran legislature, "cannot be considered basic progress in the process." In fact, they said, a package of substantial, but not definite, amendments was prepared in Mexico City "that overcome the crisis in the negotiations."

In one of the pending points, the guerrilla groups demand the establishment of limits to land ownership, which affects social groups.

The sources said that what was approved is far from being the amendments demanded by the guerrilla groups, and as long as no progress is achieved on the cease-fire issue, the negotiations could again reach a stalemate. Furthermore, the sources reported that the Salvadoran Government obstructed the dialogue process in Mexico by proposing the security corps' dissolution in exchange for the FMLN's demobilization.

Nevertheless, Costa Rican Foreign Ministry sources stated that Cristiani's government gave up its initial pretenses that "two military officers in active duty and with a right to vote had to participate in the Commission of Truth," that will be appointed by UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar. The UN will elect the commission members and it will not include military officers with a right to vote.

The guerrillas rejected the government proposal because "it does not seek to achieve the goal of demilitarizing the country," it was reported by sources close to the FMLN.

The sources added that the Salvadoran Government tried to include a package of negotiations on the Armed Forces, as well as amendments to the electoral and judicial systems, during the talks in Mexico City. The document was endorsed by the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), the National Conciliation Party (PCN), and the Authentic Christian Movement (MAC), in addition to the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA). The parties' proposal was rejected by the FMLN because the parties had agreed, since the talks started, to accept as working documents only those presented by the United Nations.

The negotiating process reached a stalemate due to international pressure on the FMLN and the Salvadoran Government to agree to comprise on a package that included agreements that had been previously signed during other dialogue meetings, a guerrilla spokesman said.

FMLN Claims Government Not Keeping Agreements

PA0205225091 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2107 GMT 2 May 91

[Text] San Salvador, 2 May (NOTIMEX)—The Farabundo Marti National Liberaton Front, FMLN, General Command gave a warning today that it will have to reevaluate its negotiating strategy because the government has not complied with the agreements reached in Mexico.

The FMLN communique highlighted "the difficulty in reaching" agreements with the Salvadoran Government in the 24 days of talks in Mexico City. Because of this, the document adds, the modifications made by the Legislative Assembly are "unacceptable and jeopardize the seriousness and future of the negotiations."

The Mexican agreements, signed by both parties and by the United Nations as a mediator, contain reforms to the Constitution that were approved—with some modifications—by the Legislative Assembly deputies whose period ended on 30 April.

The Legislative Assembly sessions were restarted yesterday, and the governing National Republican Alliance, Arena, stated therein that the ratification of the reforms—which have to be approved by the new Legislative Assembly—would be conditioned to a cease-fire by the FMLN.

In the document, the rebels announced that they will present a formal complaint to the United Nations and will try to find a solution to "this new problem posed by the government."

The parties had reaffirmed their commitment to keep the 27 April Mexican agreements, and the government had specifically agreed to foster the approval of the reforms at the acting Legislative Assembly.

The FMLN communique reported that the government has not kept the Mexican agreements but did [not] indicate the points in reference.

The document highlighted that it is "dangerous for the governing party to change agreements that have been established between the president and the FMLN and, furthermore, to include the death penalty in the reforms. This is an act of intimidation and revenge totally contrary to the reconcilliation of the Salvadoran society."

The inclusion of the death penalty in the Constitution was proposed by Arena deputies during the period assigned to the study and approval of reforms on 30 April.

The FMLN asserted that it observes with concern that, while the negotiations are going on, "the Army continues its military offensive against our positions in attempt to obtain a military victory." The FMLN also claimed that the Armed Forces is responsible for the war's intensification.

In the Mexican agreements, the parties also agreed to continue the next round of negotiations in May and the Armed Forces and cease-fire issues would be included on the agenda.

'Second Part' of 'Mexico Declaration' Annex

PA0305021991 San Salvador LA PRENSA GRAFICA in Spanish 2 May 91 p 48

["Political Agreements for the Implementation of Constitutional Reforms," signed by the Government and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, FMLN, as the "second part" of an annex to the 27 April "Mexico Declaration"]

[Text] In order to implement some of the aspects that the agreed upon constitutional reforms have submitted for the second legislative debate, the parties have agreed to the following:

A. Judicial System

a) Supreme Court of Justice

With respect to the appointment of the magistrates of the Supreme Court of Justice, as set forth by the constitutional reform, the National Council of the Judicature will maintain a list of 60 candidates, who will represent the most important currents of juridical thinking. This list will be renewed after each election of magistrates. Bar associations from different parts of the country will present the names of 30 candidates to the post of magistrate.

b) National Council of the Judicature

The National Council of the Judicature is hereby reorganized in the following manner:

1. The National Council of the Judicature will be formed so as to ensure its independence from the state branches and the political parties. It will also include, inasmuch as possible, not only judges but also sectors of society that are not directly related to the administration of justice. The law regulating the National Council of the Judicature shall be amended to adapt it to the wording of this agreement, within 90 days after the ratification of the constitutional reforms by the Legislative Assembly, which will assume its duties on 1 May, 1991. A new National Council of the Judicature will be elected within 90 days after the approval of the aforementioned legal reforms.

2. The National Council of the Judicature will be responsible for organizing and operating the Judicial Training School [Escuela de Capacitacion Judicial], which will be tasked with ensuring the uninterrupted professional training of judges and other judicial officials, as well as members of the Attorney General's Office. The Judicial Training School will investigate judicial problems in the country and promote solutions to the same; it will foster better ties of solidarity as well as coherence among judicial officials concerning a unified vision of the judicial function in the democratic state.

c) Judicial Career

The second legislative debate of the judicial career shall meet the following criteria:

1. The second legislative debate will ensure that the entry to the judicial career be based on mechanisms that can guarantee objectivity in the selection procedure, equal opportunity among the candidates, and the competence of those selected. These mechanisms will include selection based on merit and courses at the Judicial Training School.

2. The judicial career candidates will only be accepted after complying with the admission requirements established by the law.

B. Electoral System

1. The preparation of the electoral registry will be made so that the listings of elegible voters can be published at least 20 days before the date of the election. A simple and fast procedure will be established to make whatever legitimate corrections are requested by any interested party.

2. Within 60 days after the installation of the new Supreme Electoral Tribunal, a special commission—led by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal and representatives of all legally registered parties—will be created to draft a general project of reforms to the electoral system. This commission, which could include independent experts, should conclude the preparation of the general project of reforms and submit it to the Legislative Assembly 120 days after its installation. In any case, the special commission will be installed at least two years before the next legislative elections and the Legislative Assembly should have voted on the proposed reforms at least one year before the aforementioned date.

C. Armed Forces

The political agreements on the Armed Forces are referred to in the corresponding point of the Caracas agenda. However, the parties have agreed to append the aforementioned accords as follows:

1. The professional formation of the defense and public security corps members will emphasize the preeminence of human dignity and democratic values in the respect for human rights, and the corps' submission to constitutional authorities.

2. Amendments will be made, when necessary, to the secondary legislation concerning military jurisdiction—

to guarantee that under no circumstances violations whose victims are civilians or include civilians should be considered a military violation or military crime; also there will be a guarantee that civilians are not subject to military jurisdiction, under any assumption, except when it involves military crimes perpetrated in connection with an international armed conflict involving El Salvador.

Commission of Truth

The Government of El Salvador and the FMLN (henceforth known as "the Parties"):

Reassert their intention to contribute toward the reconciliation of Salvadoran society;

Recognize the need to quickly clarify acts of violence, which are uniquely important given their characteristics and repercussions—as well as the social chaos they cause—and which urgently demand a full investigation of the truth and the strengthening of the will and means to establish that truth;

Consider that, even though the need to overcome the impunity that has been brought up during the discussions of the Armed Forces on the negotiating agenda approved in Caracas on 21 May 1990, the means of investigation that the parties are willing to establish include situations whose complex nature make it advisable to handle them independently;

Agree upon the advisability of achieving this goal through a realiable and speedy procedure that may produce short-term results without undermining the obligations of the Salvadoran courts to solve these cases and administer the appropriate punishment against the culprits;

Have reached the following political agreement:

1. To create the Commission of Truth (henceforth known as "the Commission"). The Commission will be comprised of three persons appointed by the UN Secretary General, after taking the Parties' opinion into consideration. The Commission will elect its president.

Functions

2. The Commission will be in charge of investigating grave acts of violence which have occurred since 1980, and whose effects on society urgently demand that the truth be known by all. The Commission will bear in mind:
a) The unique importance that may be attributed to the events being investigated, their characteristics and repercussions, as well as the social chaos they caused; and
b) The need to create confidence in the positive changes that the peace process sponsors; and to encourage efforts toward a national reconciliation.

3. The Commission's duty will be to recommend legal, political, or administrative measures that may be inferred from the results of the investigation. The recommendations may include measures aimed at preventing the repetition of said actions, as well as initiatives aimed at achieving a national conciliation.

4. The Commission will strive to unanimously adopt its decisions. Nevertheless, if such a thing were not possible, a majority vote from its members will suffice.

5. The Commission's actions are jurisdictional.

6. If the Commission considers that any case brought to its attention does not fulfill the conditions outlined in paragraph 2 of this agreement, it may send the case to the Attorney General of the Republic, if it is considered pertinent, so that it may be handled through legal channels.

Authority

7. The Commission is fully authorized to organize its work and activities. Its actions will be carried out in a reserved manner.

8. In order to conduct an investigation, the Commission is authorized:
a) To gather, by the means it considers most adequate, all the information it considers necessary. The Commission will be fully empowered to use information sources that it considers useful and trustworthy. The Commission will receive the information within the term, and in the form, it so determines.
b) To hold unrestrained and private interviews with any person, groups, and members of organizations or institutions.
c) To visit any office or place independently and without having to give prior notice.
d) To take any steps or carry out any inquiry that it deems necessary to comply with its mandate, including requesting reports, records, documents, and any other information from government authorities or offices.

The Parties' commitments

9. The Parties pledge to give the Commission all their cooperation to gain access to sources of information.

10. The Parties pledge to comply with all the Commission's recommendations.

Report

11. The Commission will present its final report, including its conclusions and recommendations, within a six-month period that is to start at the moment of its installment.

12. The Commission will send its report to the Parties and to the U.N. Secretary General. The latter will make the report public and will make the decisions or take the initiatives its believes pertinent.

13. The Commission's mandate ends once it renders its report and the Commission as such is dissolved.

14. The agreement's provisions do not hinder the regular investigation of any situation or case—regardless of whether it has or has not been investigated by the Commission—or the implementation of pertinent legal dispositions to any illegal act. The Legislative Assembly of the Republic of El Salvador:

Whereas,

I. It is the firm purpose and duty of this assembly to contribute to the reinstatement of peace, national reconcilliation, and the reunification of Salvadoran society, as is the common will of our people;

II. The current peace negotiations, held in conformity with the 4 April 1990 Geneva agreement and 21 May 1990 Caracas agreement, require several constitutional reforms to support the political agreements reached therein;

Therefore,

In excercise of the attributes conferred upon it by Article 248 of the Constitution, approves the following constitutional reforms:

Article 1. Article 30 is repealed.

Article 2. The expression "Central Electoral Council" in Article 77 is to be replaced by "Supreme Electoral Tribunal" and the following new paragraph is to be added to the mentioned article:

The legally registered political parties will have the right to watch over the preparation, organization, publication, and updating of the electoral registry.

Article 3. Ordinal 37 of Article 131 is to be reformed thus:

To recommend the removal of a minister to the Presidency of the Republic or the dismissal of officials in autonomous government institutions to the corresponding organizations when it finds it necessary to do so as a result of investigations carried out by its special commissions or by interpellations, depending on the case. The Assembly's resolution will be compulsory when it refers to serious human rights violations by heads of government public security or intelligence offices.

Article 4. Article 162 is to be reformed thus:

Article (162). It is the responsibility of the president of the Republic to designate, remove, accept resignations, and grant license to the ministers and deputy ministers as well as heads of government public security and government offices.

Article 5. Article 163 is to be changed thus:

Article (163). The decrees, agreements, orders, and provisions of the President of the Republic must be endorsed and communicated by the ministers of the corresponding branches or by the deputy minister depending on the case. Without these requirements they will not be legal. (To be continued)

Guatemala

Serrano Satisfied With Guerrilla Meeting

PA0205185391 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0059 GMT 30 Apr 91

[Text] Guatemala City, 29 Apr (NOTIMEX)—Guatemalan President Jorge Serrano said today that the first meeting between the Guatemalan Government and the guerrillas has favorably set the basis for finding a solution to the armed conflict the country has endured for three decades.

The president stated his satisfaction with the results of the meeting held in Mexico City from 24 to 26 April between a government delegation and the General Command of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity [URNG].

At the opening of a seminar on the problem of housing in Guatemala, Serrano said that the government's peace initiative is being proposed to the people and he invited the country's social sectors to participate in the peace process. The main points of the government's peace plan deal with an end to the war, economic and social justice, and the country's democratization.

The Guatemalan president explained that the social pact he has requested involves the country's pacification because the pact is not aimed only at resolving labor problems, but also at creating a harmonious relationship between the government, the private sector, and the working class.

Deputy Oliverio Garcia Rodas, alternate representative of the opposition parties at the National Reconciliation Commission, said that the upcoming round of talks with the URNG "will be very difficult."

At the meeting in Mexico, the government and the guerrillas agreed on an agenda for the political negotiations currently underway to put an end to an armed conflict that has already lasted 30 years. They have agreed to initiate talks on the Indian population issue during the second half of May.

Garcia Rodas said that a peace agreement is not like Aladdin's magic lamp, "and the May meeting will be just the beginning of negotiations that may lead to the country's reconstruction."

Nicaragua

'Commander Ruben' Says Shooting 'Irresponsible'

PA0205213491 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1823 GMT 2 May 91

[Text] Oscar Sovalbarro, "Commander Ruben," deputy minister of the Nicaraguan Institute for Repatriation,

has said that the attack at the Intercontinental Hotel, where President Chamorro was attending a wedding reception, was an irresponsible act carried out by a drunk Nicaraguan Resistance [RN] member. However, he points out that his organization does not engage in terrorism.

[Begin recording] [Sovalbarro] It is very important to clarify this matter. We must keep in mind that there are firearms scattered throughout Nicaragua, particularly in Managua. I think many people are armed because shortly after the Sandinists lost the elections, they irresponsibly distributed arms to everyone. Firing at the hotel was an act of irresponsibility carried out by a former RN member. Such an action by a drunk person is beyond the RN's control; however, I think a thorough investigation is in order. If the person or persons truly responsible are identified, justice must be served. I want to say that the RN leadership and the Nicaraguan Institute for Repatriation had nothing to do with this incident; Secretaries' Day was being commemorated. In the evening after work, people can go home or go someplace to have a drink. Such a person is likely to do a number of things. The Sandinist media has tried to confuse the public by blaming the RN for this action, given the many criminal actions which have occurred over the past few months. Neither terrorist acts nor scandals have been part of the RN's policy. Cases like this one are beyond the control of any one institution. Once the investigation is complete, those responsible should be punished. We pledge to support any efforts in this regard with any information we might be able to provide so that the Government Ministry can conduct a truly thorough inquiry.

[Reporter] The Government Ministry's investigation points to Harold Quesada, an RN member, known as "Charlie." Do you think he is responsible?

[Sovalbarro] According to statements made by "Commander Chilo," and because of a rifle found at Quesada's home, he was a suspect until yesterday. I am not saying he is the person truly responsible for the attack. He may or may not be. Anyway, it is up to the Government Ministry to determine whether he is responsible or not. In a letter addressed to Radio Corporacion today, Quesada admitted to the irresponsible act of driving a vehicle belonging to "Commander Wilmer" and firing an AK-47 rifle. Although he admitted to firing the rifle at a military base along the Southern Highway, he reiterated that he did not fire at the hotel. [end recording]

Godoy Views Attack on Chamorro, Police Defiance

PA0205162291 Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 29 Apr 91 pp 1,12

[Article by Julio Cesar Armas]

[Text] Commenting on what has been described as an attack on President Violeta Chamorro, Virgilio Godoy, vice president of the Republic, has said that "it is not an attack, but an act of arrogance and a warning against changes in the police command." At midnight on 27 April, two individuals fired shots from a moving vehicle on La Cabana Restaurant at the Intercontinental Hotel.

Godoy later said that one should examine Daniel Ortega's 28 April speech in Vista Alegre, Masaya Department, declaring intention to resist, even through the use of violence, any executive branch measures designed to modify Sandinists' political agenda. He added that Daniel Ortega's speech virtually amounted to a call for a rebellion.

Godoy said that the recent talk about the possibility of replacing Police Chief Rene Vivas Lugo is a perfectly normal procedure in any country because policemen are not permanent appointees. He stressed that policemen are subject to dismissal if they are not willing to solve crimes that detract from the country's credibility and stability, such as the recent killing of engineer Enrique Bermudez.

In addition, Godoy explained that police chiefs should submit their resignation before they are asked to do so and Mr. Vivas Lugo should have followed this procedure. In this case, however, a mere speculation about the removal of the police chief promoted the police officers' organization to declare its intention to resist any order or resolution by the president of the Republic. We will see, Godoy continued, if the government has some self-respect and moves to impose discipline on this insubordinate body which appears to be on the verge of rebellion, apparently instigated by Daniel Ortega.

We questioned Dr. Godoy on the Transition Protocol Agreement referred to by former President Ortega. Ortega had said "the government had pledged to respect the police leadership structure and the property of the beneficiaries of the revolution."

Godoy stated that "evidently, Antonio Lacayo has put the government in a strait jacket when signing such agreements with General Humberto Ortega. However, Lacayo had also pledged, although it is not specified in the agreement, to isolate the vice president and not to give him any government functions. Therefore, we have a weak government which is practically held hostage by the military and the police. [no closing quotation mark as published]

As far as the Transition Protocol Agreement is concerned, Godoy said that he had warned at the time—in agreement with the UNO [National Opposition Union] Political Council— that Antonio Lacayo had no power to conduct any political negotiations with the outgoing government. And, because Godoy had not signed or acknowledged the Transition Protocol Agreement; he is not obliged to obey it or to recognize it.

We concluded the interview by raising the possibility that Vice President Godoy may some day occupy the presidency, as specified by the Constitution.

CIAV-OAS Denies Alleging Links to Attack

PA0205184391 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1344 GMT 2 May 91

[Communique from the OAS International Commission of Support and Verification, CIAV-OAS, to EL NUEVO DIARIO's director, issued in Managua on 1 May—read by unidentified station announcer]

[Text] Based on the common use of the international press and according to international law, I hereby request the full and complete publication of the following text on the same page and with the same publicity level afforded an inaccurate report regarding CIAV-OAS participation in activities related to the regrettable attack against Her Excellency President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, an action which we condemn in the strongest terms.

We inform the media and citizens in general that:

1. The activities carried out by the CIAV-OAS in the Republic of Nicaragua stem from mandates granted by the Central American presidents who agreed in Tela, Honduras in 1989 to have the OAS and UN secretaries general create a commission to help establish a stable and durable peace in the region, particularly in Nicaragua.

2. According to the text and spirit of the Tela Agreement and its joint plan No. 78-89, the CIAV-OAS must guarantee the security of former Nicaraguan Resistance [RN] members by following up and verifying that their fundamental socioeconomic, political, and civil rights are being respected. In other words, the CIAV-OAS directs its attention and actions toward what, in general terms, is known as the guaranteed rights of the individuals for which the mandate was issued; the demobilized members of the former RN, their relatives, and a great number of repatriated citizens. To this date, the number of these people has been estimated at approximately 100,000.

3. While exercising its mandate, the CIAV-OAS was notified of an alleged search conducted by the National Police at the residence of Maximino Rodriguez Martinez, Commander Wilmer, located at the 3.5 km marker on the Southern Highway, in the (name indistinct) neighborhood. Once CIAV-OAS officials confirmed the presence of two patrols and approximately eight policemen from the National Police General Directorate, they talked with Lieutenant Claudio Solas of the Patrol Department who was the officer in charge of the operation. According to Lt. Solas, the orders he received from higher authorities were to carry out routine surveillance, but they did not call for any type of detention or search. CIAV-OAS officials left the scene after completing their verification.

4. Prior to this, unsuccessful attempts were made with the highest authorities in the National Police and Government Ministry to ascertain the scope and purpose of this or other actions carried out by the police involving Maximino Rodriguez Martinez. On the afternoon of Tuesday, 30 April, the CIAV-OAS was informed by Lieutenant Guzman of the DGTN [expansion unknown] that the police had enough evidence to confirm that a vehicle owned by Rodriguez was used in the attack against President Chamorro. However, the participation of Commander Wilmer, who had just been released after testifying before the Judicial Investigation Directorate [Direccion de Instruccion Judicial] could not be confirmed.

On the basis of an objective analysis of the aforementioned facts, we strongly reject the assertion published in your widely read newspaper regarding an evident CIAV-OAS connection with the attack on President Chamorro which appeared as a subtitle in an article stating that the contras had carried out the attack. This allegation is absolutely false and distorts the truth about the work we are conducting on behalf of democracy and the reconciliation of Nicaraguan society.

In the same manner, we deny the so-called details mentioned in point No. 5 by EL NUEVO DIARIO that supposedly show an evident connection and probable complicity between the CIAV-OAS and the incident. Our commission's activities are conducted within a strict framework of legality, cooperation, and interrelation with the various institutions recognized by the illustrious Nicaraguan Government.

[Signed] Santiago Murray, CIAV-OAS general coordinator in Nicaragua

Chile

President Aylwin Speaks at Labor Day Rally

PY0205230091 Santiago Television Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 1650 GMT 1 May 91

[Speech by President Patricio Aylwin at a Labor Day rally organized by the Central Labor Union from the Estacion Central District in Santiago—live]

[Excerpts] Dear Manuel Bustos and Arturo Martinez, president and vice president of the Central Labor Union [CUT]; Mr. Senate President; Ministers; friends and leaders of the CUT; leaders of trade unions and federations; friends and workers of Chile:

I am here to convey the government's greetings to the workers of my country, to their labor unions, to those who struggle in defense of the rights and dignity of Chilean workers. [passage omitted]

The Chilean labor movement and its workers are living a new stage, a stage of rebirth for our democracy. What has the advent of democracy—which took place one year and two months ago—meant to Chilean workers? Let me first make a brief assessment of what has been achieved so far and then refer to the many things that still must be accomplished.

As pointed out by CUT President Manuel Bustos, I think a substantial change has taken place in relations between the government and workers. The freedom of workers has not been threatened and their leaders have been respected. They have been listened to. Their organizations are recognized and the government is making an effort to interpret their aspirations and to seek formulas to satisfy the workers' needs and interests.

Within this framework we have followed a policy of seeking agreement, because circumstances and history have demonstrated that more progress can be made by seeking reasonable understandings rather than confrontations. We have achieved important accomplishments, including the agreement reached among the CUT, the Production and Commerce Confederation, and the government in April 1990; the agreement reached among the CUT, the ANEF [National Association of Government Employees], and the government to improve the situation of public employees in October 1990; the agreement reached between the government and port workers in February 1991; and the agreement signed yesterday among the CUT, the Production and Commerce Confederation, Conupia [United National Confederation of Small Industries and Crafts], and the government to regulate minimum salaries for the next term.

What is the significance of the agreements, changes, and policies that were implemented this past year? I am well aware that they have not meant a substantial change or improvement in the living conditions of Chilean workers. However, important progress has certainly been achieved, including the 44-percent increase in the minimum salary last year; the doubling of the family bonus for 2.2 million workers; the 45-percent family bonus increase for 400,000 workers; the 50-percent single family allowance increase; and the 10.6- to 20-percent increase for three-quarters of our pensioners. These are effective achievements that will make life a little less difficult for Chile's poor. [passage omitted]

During this first year under the democratic government, Chilean workers have also received other benefits that have contributed to improving their living standards. Among these benefits is the renegotiation of debts with the Serviu [Housing and Urban Development Service]. Yesterday the Serviu started distributing debt cancellation certificates, which means the lifting of all mortgages on the properties of 145,000 Chilean citizens who acquired homes through Serviu and who ran the risk of losing those properties due to debts which prevented them from obtaining their corresponding title deeds. The renegotiation and cancellation plan has allowed these 145,000 Chilean citizens to lift all mortgages; it will allow them to sleep in peace since they know now that they own their property and no longer owe on it. [applause]

The renegotiation of debts on potable water, electricity, and taxes has also contributed to improving the living standards of the most needy sectors. I reiterate that I am aware that this does not solve every problem, that it is not enough, but it represents a real improvement compatible with the real possibilities of our economy.

As I said last year on 1 May, the government is fully aware that we need a balanced economic policy to truly improve the workers' living standards and to guarantee that this improvement is not absorbed by inflation. We cannot spend more than we collect. We must ensure the compliance with that which economists call the laws of macroeconomic stability; otherwise we run the risk of allowing our wage increases to vanish, as has been the case with other countries on our continent where economic improvement after the advent of democracy has turned out to be an illusion. [passage omitted]

We have also sponsored legal changes to create a fair and efficient labor institution. The law on the termination of work contracts has been approved. This means more guarantees and higher severance pay, the five-month limit of which has been raised to 11 months. We have attained substantial progress for a working sector which has always been abandoned and forgotten. I am speaking of domestic servants, for whom severance pay has been guaranteed through a contribution system.

We have passed a law on labor unions which recognizes the right of workers and labor unions to freely organize themselves in labor centrals so they may have greater bargaining power and representation. A law on labor unions and collective bargaining, which represents substantial progress in the power and negotiating capacity of labor unions, has been approved. This law will establish

an expeditious wage-setting mechanism and will give the workers an instrument to strengthen their unions. [passage omitted]

All this means that by the end of the year we will be able to have a new democratically created labor code. I want to note that the two labor codes that existed in Chile, one from 1931 and one passed by the authoritarian regime, were prepared undemocratically, without the workers participation and imposed on them. This labor code, which we expect to be approved by the end of the year after all these laws are organized, will be the first democratically created labor code in Chile's history. With the purpose of supporting the labor unions, we have sent Congress a draft bill to return to the unions the assets which were stripped from them by the previous regime. [applause]

Meanwhile, as this law is approved and in compliance with what I promised you on 1 May last year, the government has lent the CUT a house for its headquarters with the appropriate facilities for such an institution. [passage omitted]

Manuel Bustos mentioned the need to promote a greater participation of the working class, and I fully agree with him. We want to create a participative society. Democracy means participation, and we need to open more channels for participation. We have already done something about this. Participation means listening to what the workers have to say. Every day the government—starting with the president of the Republic, the labor, economy, and finance ministers, and the respective officials—keeps its doors open to listen to and discuss the workers' proposals. This is participation. No decision is made without listening.

But participation does not mean—as Manuel Bustos correctly pointed out—cogovernment. The responsibility of leading the country is in the hands of the government in its capacity as the representative organization that must take into account both individual and national interests and needs.

We cannot say that participation means that each decision must be subject to an agreement; we cannot say that a decision cannot be made because a given sector, no matter how respectable, does not agree with it. The government fulfills its duty by listening, by creating forums for discussion, and we are willing to continue creating and institutionalizing more and more forums for organized participation. But the final decision will always be made by the state bodies established by the Constitution or by those called upon to govern the country. [applause]

Manuel Bustos also mentioned a subject which some of you in the back are shouting about and to which many posters I can see here refer: the subject of dismissed workers. [applause] We are fully aware that this is a problem that must be solved, but it will not be easy. We are seeking a solution. [passage omitted]

We are also making progress in another area which has not been mentioned: persons living in exile. During my recent trip to Europe I met with Chileans living in exile in Madrid, London, Stuttgart, and Rome, where there are large communities of Chilean citizens willing to return to Chile. We have created the National Office for the Return of Chileans in Exile. We are providing the necessary resources and seeking the necessary means so that those fellow countrymen who wish to return—people who left Chile against their will, people with whom it is truly moving to meet, because their eyes shine with nostalgia and love for Chile—may do so. We also hope to be able to open channels so that those who wish to return may do so, not to remain idle but to have a job in the country to allow them to make an honest living. [applause]

We are fully aware that the problem of employment and training to which Manuel Bustos referred, especially in the youth sectors, is one of our most serious and urgent problems. As I stated in a news conference on the first anniversary of my government, we have made progress, but I am concerned about three basic problems, including the poverty affecting many Chileans who have never managed to live under real human conditions. Closely related to that poverty is the problem of unemployment, which especially affects many Chilean youths. This is a problem affecting youths who hope for job opportunities in their fatherland, who hope to have a home, to live decently, and to become active elements of progress. But instead they find the doors closed because education has not given them the appropriate training for a given job, because they have no solid prospects for a worthy and stable job.

We want to solve this problem. We are trying to find formulas to continue the progress. I must confess that I am distressed over the slowness of the processes, the process of training manpower, the process of training youths for work. This is a problem that requires an urgent solution. A quick solution must be found to this problem. [passage omitted]

I have also said that a problem which greatly concerns me is the crime rate. The truth is that this problem is perhaps due to the subhuman conditions in which certain Chilean sectors live, failures in the educational system, and the permanent propaganda of violence in the mass media. Let me repeat myself: Television programs are to a large extent responsible for this violence. Children from an early age see nothing but films of violence in which the hero is the one who does most of the killing. [applause]

These are factors which lead to crime. We must be able to face this problem with decisiveness, with evenhandedness, and not just with repressive measures. We must seek to reeducate the criminals, but I would like to reiterate: The government will be firm in repressing and punishing violence and terrorism. [applause]

When the pope visited he said Chile has the ability to achieve agreement rather than confrontation. We are going through a stage in which we have a real opportunity to use our goodwill to contribute to building a civilized coexistence based on respect for people, the dignity of our fellow citizens, tolerance, and the desire to achieve justice through reason and not violence. The Chilean people's struggle to recover democracy was a struggle against those who wanted to govern the country by force, not by reason. Let no one try to turn us away from this course. [applause]

I endorse the words of the CUT president, who categorically condemned violence and terrorism. I call upon all of my fellow countrymen to unite to isolate the terrorists and those who promote violence, to convince them that their path is not a path of life, but death. [applause]

I also endorse his statements on human rights and on the need to remember and to continue the task that has grown out of the report submitted by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. We have repeatedly said that reconciliation and peace can be built only upon the foundations of truth and justice. We have the truth. We have to make progress toward justice. We hope that the courts will discharge their duties. [whistling]

Let us say this clearly: Like it or not, justice is administered by the courts. It is not the government's duty to administer justice. [whistling] The government will use all available means, but it will respect the principle of the independence of each branch.

We should also carry out justice by providing reparations to the relatives of the victims. This implies a restoration of the honor and dignity of victims and the improvement of the living standards of their relatives. Although it is incomplete, this is also an act of justice. The government has submitted a draft bill on the issue to Congress.

Chilean workers, fellow countrymen, the entire nation is facing a major challenge. It is a challenge that the world has posed as this century nears its end and as the new millennium dawns. It is the challenge of reconciling, on the one hand, coexistence on the basis of respect for dignity and freedom—that is, political democracy—and, on the other, economic growth to produce more and to have more goods to meet the needs of people. At the same time, social justice must be preserved, so that freedom and prosperity do not benefit just a few but all the people, all Chileans, especially those who live by their work. [applause] [passage omitted]

I call upon everyone, especially my fellow countrymen, the workers, to join this effort, so that we may together build the fatherland we desire. Thank you very much. [applause]

* Poll Reveals Public View of Political Parties

91SM0278B Santiago LA NACION in Spanish 24 Mar 91 p 11

[Text] Eighty percent of the adult population of greater Santiago supports reform of the Judiciary, according to the findings of the most recent poll, March 1991, conducted by the political-research section of the Institute for the New Chile; the findings were made public yesterday.

Some 72.3 percent also agree with President Aylwin that the Supreme Court "lacked moral courage."

This is the fifth poll conducted by the Institute for the New Chile; its purpose is to quantify the political preferences, perceptions, and opinions of the adult population of greater Santiago.

Institutions and Major Figures

Lincoyan Zepeda, the executive secretary of the institute, and sociologist Hugo Rivas emphasized the high marks that the Catholic Church, the administration, and the Armed Forces alike received; all of them got 5 or above. On a 1 to 7 scale, the church received a 5.4, the administration a 5.3, and the Armed Forces a 5.0. The worst grade went to the Supreme Court, a 3.8, and among the branches of defense and public order, the Army received the lowest mark, a 4.0, while the Carabineros earned a 4.8, the Navy a 4.6, and Congress a 4.7.

The administration is thus up 0.3 from last December, the Army down 0.1, the Navy down 0.2, the Air Force down 0.2 as well, Carabineros down 0.4, the Supreme Court down 0.5, Congress down 0.2, and the Catholic Church up 0.1.

As for public figures, President Patricio Aylwin remains in first place with 5.7 (up 0.2). Monsignor Carlos Oviedo is next with 5.3 (down 0.2). Then come Eduardo Frei with 5.1 (he was not in the previous survey) and Ricardo Lagos (5). The lowest mark went to General Augusto Pinochet, 3.1, down from his previous 3.3.

Opinions of Rettig Report

The respondents were shown a series of statements about this issue and were asked to say to what extent they agreed with them.

Some 58.1 percent agreed that the report offers an impartial, objective view of human rights violations; 18.5 percent disagreed.

Some 36.2 percent agreed that the report will heighten the split between Chileans, but 42.4 percent disagreed with this statement.

Some 61.1 percent agreed that the president's proposals are the most appropriate for resolving the problem of human rights violations; 17.9 percent disagreed.

By and large, the respondents strongly support the administration's proposals and policies in this area.

Political Parties

The poll confirms the findings of previous surveys on support for and opposition to political parties. The Christian Democrat Party (PDC) is still in the lead, up 0.1 from December at 30.4 percent. It is followed by RN [National Renewal] with 12.1. The Center Center Union (UCC) appears in the poll for the first time, displacing the PPD [Party for Democracy] and, above all, the UDI [Independent Democratic Union], whose decline, from 7.3 to 2.8) is very striking.

As for opposition, the MIR [Movement of the Revolutionary Left] received 13.1 percent; this surely stems from the opposition to the PC [Communist Party] that was expressed in previous polls. As a result of this development, along with growing antipathy towards the UDI (31.8 percent), the latter takes the top spot for the first time, displacing the PC from this unenviable position.

Support for and Opposition to Political Parties

	Support (percent)			Opposition (percent)		
Party	Sep 90	Dec 90	Mar 91	Sep 90	Dec 90	Mar 91
PPD	9.3	14.0	11.2	2.2	2.0	1.8
Radical Party	2.1	2.8	2.0	0.9	1.0	0.4
UDI	3.4	7.3	2.8	29.4	27.6	31.8
Socialist Party	7.5	9.5	9.1	1.6	3.2	2.8
PDC	34.4	30.4	31.1	2.2	1.5	1.4
RN	11.0	11.2	12.1	8.4	9.9	5.1
PC	5.1	3.5	3.3	34.3	36.9	28.1
Central Central Union	—	—	6.1	—	—	0.9
MIR	—	—	1.3	3.2	1.2	13.3
Others	5.0	1.6	1.5	3.2	1.2	0.7
None	18.5	14.9	15.6	13.7	11.4	9.8
Not sure/no answer	3.7	4.7	3.8	4.1	5.2	4.0

Where People Place Themselves on the Political Spectrum

Position	Jun 90	Sep 90	Dec 90	Mar 91
Right	10.1	10.1	10.7	10.1
Center right	7.9	8.1	8.8	6.5
Center	27.6	29.3	25.1	28.0
Center left	13.7	14.6	13.0	13.2
Left	13.8	13.2	11.8	13.5
None of the above	18.4	17.5	25.1	21.7
Not sure/no answer	8.5	7.2	5.6	7.0

The poll also reveals a positive view of President Aylwin's first year in office. In this regard, a large majority point to peace in the streets, a climate of freedom, and respect for human rights as positive values. The preservation of the social market economy is also mentioned.

The rise in crime and terrorism is mentioned as the most negative development. The conditions of the poorest Chileans, followed by crime, are singled out as the problems that the administration ought to resolve this year.

* Regional Government Reforms Sent to Congress

91SM0279A Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish6 Apr 91 p C1

[Text] A constitutional reform bill that went to the Chamber of Deputies yesterday proposes changes in government organization and regional administration. Under the measure legislators in each of the country's zones would be part of a regional government incorporated under public law. These units would be vested with governmental, administrative and fiscal powers. Each regional government would be made up of an intendant, a regional council, and local consultative bodies as provided by law.

The initiative sent to the Chamber by the executive branch would create the post of intendant. The intendant would be the direct representative of the president of the republic and would also head the executive branch in the local government. Appointments to this post would be made by the president, and appointees would hold office at the pleasure of the president.

The bill states that the intendant's duties would be to set policy, draft plans and projects for development within the region, and prepare budgets. The bill specifies that these functions should be carried out in accord with national development and budget policies. In addition, the intendant must supervise, coordinate, and monitor public services with the exception of those provided by the controller general and the court system.

The bill describes regional councils as collegial bodies with the power to pass laws and resolutions and to conduct investigations. The councils are to be composed of members elected by direct universal suffrage as provided by law. They will serve terms of four years.

The reforms call for a presidentially appointed governor to head the executive branch in each territory. The president would have the power to remove governors from office at will. As a general rule, these organs of the executive branch would not exist in provincial capitals that were also seats of regional governments.

The reform states that a portion of total public investment to be determined by law will be placed in a National Regional Development Fund. However, the measure stipulates that money for this fund will not come out of the allotments to regional governments under the national budget law. The law will establish guidelines for disbursements from the Regional Development Fund and will spell out other assets and rights to fall within the domain of regional governments.

The Reforms

The constitutional reform bill consists of a single article. It modifies article 3 of the constitution by stating that the Chilean state—though unitary in nature—is divided into regions, provinces, and municipalities. The new measure says: "The law seeks to foster their administration in a functionally and territorially decentralized manner."

The bill also changes part two of article 54 by stating that intendants, governors, mayors, and persons sitting on regional councils may not run for election as deputies or senators. This serves to exclude members of community councils.

The bill seeks modification of the government and regional administration clauses of the constitution. Article 100 vests regional governments with the power to manage their own internal affairs and senior administrative staffs. The regional governments are to be incorporated under public law. They are to have specific rights, powers, and governmental, administrative, and financial functions. The key offices within the regional governments would include the intendant, the regional council, and such community consultative bodies as they law provides.

Also called for are changes in article 101, which defines the intendant as the direct representative of the president of the republic. In addition, article 101 spells out the nature and powers of the office of intendant.

Article 102 creates regional councils as the bodies that make laws, pass resolutions, and conduct investigations. It is their duty to serve as an effective channel for citizen participation in government. They should exercise their functions in accordance with the law, and their organization, number of members, method of election, and terms of office should be accordingly encoded in law.

Article 103 establishes the means for decentralizing the government's administrative powers. It says transfer of powers to regional governments should be gradual and selective.

The bill also introduces important changes in article 104, which talks about resources earmarked for regional governments.

It states that these governmental units may be authorized by law to enter into associations with physical and corporate persons to sponsor activities or initiatives that contribute to local development. It also stipulates that these governments cannot take out loans.

Colombia

Rebels Call Off Caracas Meeting With Government

PA0205153391 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1422 GMT 2 May 91

[Text] Bogota, 2 May (EFE)—The National Guerrilla Coordinating Board [CNG] announced today that it will not participate in the negotiations it was to hold in Caracas with representatives of the Colombian Government.

In a communique sent to Radio Caracol, the rebel organization says that this measure does not mean that the CNG has altered its decision to release, "as a reaffirmation of its will to negotiate," the more than 60 soldiers and policemen that it is holding captive.

This past Tuesday, three CNG members, accompanied by some Colombian political leaders, occupied the Venezuelan Embassy in Bogota to demand that peace talks be held in this capital.

The Colombian Government has refused to hold talks in Bogota, but accepted a meeting in Caracas with the three CNG representatives who obtained political asylum in Venezuela. The CNG communique made public today points out that the three guerrilla representatives are authorized to negotiate in Bogota only, and therefore there will be no talks in Caracas.

The CNG states in its communique that the government's refusal to negotiate with the delegation that occupied the Venezuelan Embassy "makes evident that its continuous affirmations about an open-door policy are just rhetoric." The CNG comprises the two guerrilla groups that remain active in Colombia: the National Liberation Army and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.

Government Wants Commitment

PA0305022091 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0016 GMT 3 May 91

[Text] Bogota, 2 May (EFE)—Colombian President Cesar Gaviria's administration today asked the National Guerrilla Coordinating Board (CNG) to give "clear proof that its willingness to start an effective peace dialogue is sincere." The petitition is included in a communique from the presidency of the Republic, issued hours after the CNG denied that it had given any authority to three rebels who entered the Venezuelan Embassy in Bogota on 30 April to exert pressure for a dialogue.

The three guerrilla members received political asylum and went to Caracas, after staying in the Venezuelan Embassy in Bogota, and failing to obtain an agreement to hold a dialogue "under pressure."

Shortly after rebel commanders Lucia Gonzalez, Miguel Suarez Piragua, and Daniel Aldana went to Venezuela, the government issued a communique agreeing to participate in a dialogue. The CNG answered with another text, sent today to Radio Caracol, saying that the measure will not affect its decision to release more than 60 military members and policemen who are held hostages, "to prove its willingness to participate in a dialogue."

The CNG said that the government's refusal to negotiate with the commission which occupied the Venezuelan Embassy "proves that its constant statements about an open-door policy are merely rhetoric." Nevertheless, the government said that it suggested, through the Episcopal Conference—which acted as mediator to achieve peace talks—several places in Colombian territory, in reply to the CNG's request. "All the places were rejected by the guerrilla organizations," the government criticized.

Therefore, the government today reasserted "its decision and willingness to participate in a dialogue," in the country or abroad, "because it believes that it is time for the guerrilla organizations to give the country clear proof that their willingness to start an effective dialogue is sincere."

The CNG is made up of the guerrilla groups that are still active in Colombia: The Army of National Liberation and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.

Constituent Assembly Reforms Internal Statutes

PA0205205191 Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1200 GMT 2 May 91

[Text] The National Constituent Assembly decided to reform its internal statutes in order to be able to rule on the Constitution. The surprise decision was made in answer to a judgment by the State Council limiting the powers of the Constituent Assembly.

The proposal passed with 56 votes, only four voted against it. Liberal Party [PL] representatives Carlos Lemos Simmonds, Eduardo Espinosa Facio Lince, and Eduardo Carrillo, as well as M-19 [19 April Movement Democratic Alliance] delegate Jose Maria Velasco, stated that was not convenient to abide by such measure.

Carlos Lleras De La Fuente, Constituent Assembly member for the National Salvation Movement [MSN], drafted the constitutional reform project. Lleras proposed the elimination of Article 13 on the 1957 plebiscite and Article 218 on the country's current political code.

The president of the assembly for the MSN, Alvaro Gomez Hurtado, said that last night's decision would prevent the State Council from making decisions outside its sphere of responsibility.

The president of the Assembly for the PL, Horacio Serpa Uribe, said that decision could cause the Assembly's decisions to be revised later.

Carlos Lleras De La Fuente, Constituent Assembly member for the MSN, reiterated that the Constituent Assembly is autonomous and absolute. He told Radio Cadena Nacional that the statement made by the State Council regarding the influence of Decree 19-26 of 1990 was erroneous.

Lleras De La Fuente said that neither the Supreme Court of Justice nor the State Council have the power to make statements on the Constituent Assembly's actions. He added that Decree 19-26 lost its standing when the people voted for the formation of the Constituent Assembly on 9 December 1990.

Venezuela

* Study Indicates Decline in Purchasing Power

91SM0272B Caracas EL NACIONAL in Spanish 18 Mar 91 p D1

[Article by Elizabeth Araujo: "Venezuelan Consumer Capacity Will Deteriorate"]

[Text] Based on the country's economic indicators for this year as published by Datos, Inc., Venezuelan consumer trends will basically be toward fewer and smaller products, given the fact that purchasing power will increase a bare 1.5 percent over the current wage.

Datos used a population figure for 1991 of 22 million (verifiable), plus another 1.5 million unverifiable, meaning that by the year 2000, the population will have increased 28 percent over 1989.

The study shows that Class E (the poorest sector of the population) has grown enormously, inasmuch as from 32 percent in 1987, it now accounts for 45 percent of the population.

Level of Consumption Plummets

Last Friday was International Consumer Rights Day except in Venezuela, and we watch anxiously as our wages disappear in those places now designed for highway robbery known as grocery stores or supermarkets.

This troubling situation, which President Perez greeted with strange optimism on the occasion of his annual congressional address, was reflected in the research done by Datos, Inc., for which firm Venezuelans classified in the sociodemographic profile E (the country's poorest class) comprised 45 percent of the population last year, compared with the 1987 estimate of 32 percent.

There has also been a reduction in the population group called the "middle class" (sectors C and D), which went from 25 (in 1987) to 18 percent (1990) for sector C and from 40 (1987) to 36 percent (1990) for sector D. Sectors A and B (the wealthiest groups), which made up 3 percent of the population in 1990, have dropped to 1 percent.

It should be pointed out that, according to figures released by the OCEI [National Office of Statistics and Information] and the BCV [Central Bank of Venezuela], 25 out of every 100 families belonged to the so-called higher class in 1979, while 46 were in the middle class. Ten years later, we discover that only nine of those 25 families are now in the upper strata, while scarcely 29 could boast of their middle-class status.

According to the 1989 Report on World Development published by the World Bank, only 10 percent of all Venezuelan families received over 35 percent of all family income, while 23 percent of the poorest people obtained less than 4 percent of that same family income.

Dr. Pedro Luis Castellanos of the Pan American Health Organization recently emphasized that as a result of the economic crisis that has hit Third World countries hard, the most impoverished sectors of most of those nations have not only had their access to medical care considerably reduced, but their living conditions have also deteriorated substantially, with increased unemployment, poverty, malnutrition, and deterioration of the environment, a decline in basic sanitation, access to formal education, and recreational possibilities.

"Even though the crisis has affected the majority of the population, all things seems to indicate that within that context, many countries have suffered an increase and heightening of social inequalities in terms of living conditions and health."

Castellanos said that the greatest source of inequalities is the existence of social classes.

"This means the population groups that are articulated differently in terms of the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services and power relationships in society."

Food: Prime Factor

The study, done by the Datos polling firm, drew a profile of consumer attitudes in the country based on the way Venezuelans behave. The research shows that Venezuelans demonstrate less brand loyalty and that food absorbs most of the family budget.

The situation of accelerated inflation has forced Venezuelans to switch to lower quality products. Experts say this points toward more rational consumption, inasmuch as people are now forced to stretch their budgets, which requires planning.

While going through this so-called transitional phase, optimists make the most of the uncontrolled inflationary process, alleging that it has generated a change in consumer habits as a result of which the product or item purchased represents the exact price paid for it.

The projection last year, when the most outstanding features were the rise in food and personal care products (contrary to the perceptible drop registered by home products), allows us, the same study says, to visualize three facts to be added to the Venezuelan consumer profile in these times of crisis: the purchase of smaller products, the purchase of fewer units, and the purchase of only that which is absolutely necessary.

[Box, p D1]

Economic Indicators 1991, Venezuela

1—Population by 1991: 22 million inhabitants (verifiable) + 1.5 million (unverifiable). Growth: +3 percent versus 1990. By the year 2000, the population will have grown an estimated 28 percent over 1989.

2—Gross domestic product: +3.5 percent, totaling 485 billion

3—1991 purchasing power: +1.5 percent

4—Level of inflation: 40 percent (average)

5—Sociodemographic profile:

AB: 3 percent (1987); 1 percent (1990)

C: 25 percent (1987); 18 percent (1990)

D: 40 percent (1987); 36 percent (1990)

E: 32 percent (1987); 45 percent (1990)

6—One-third of the labor force is "informal."

Source: Datos, Inc.